

Oregon

Music Educator



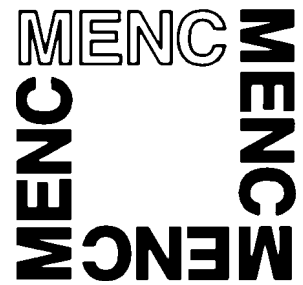
Advocacy Issue

W i n t e r 2 0 0 3 V o l u m e L I V # 2

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North By Northwest

Lynn Brinckmeyer
Northwest Division President

Connect with Music in Portland—2003

Our MENC Northwest Division Conference in Portland is just around the corner. If you have not already received an application in the mail for registration, you can register online at www.menc.org or call 1.800.828.0229 for registration and housing information.

These events are possible only with the help of dedicated volunteers. Just in case you missed the names of the Honor Group Managers in the previous issue of your state journal, they are Debbie Glaze, Mixed Choir; Karen Bohart, Women's Choir; Kevin Egan, Band; Jeff Cumpston, Jazz Band; Candice Seidle, Jazz Choir; and Rob Rayfield. Oregon State Screeners are Dave Matthys, band; Vance Sele, choir; and David DeRoest, Orchestra. I encourage you to let these individuals know how much you appreciate the time and energy they gave in order for your students to participate.

Also, I ask you to honor the people who are serving in any capacity in Oregon and the Northwest Division. Trust that they are doing the very best they can. Often they have information that is not available to you and must make difficult choices in order to respect the entire division. Caring music teachers who volunteer to run the honor groups, screen tapes, and develop education sessions, etc., do everything possible to make consistent and fair decisions.

Another quick reminder: conference keynote speakers are Willie Hill, MENC National President; and Mary Luehrsen, who is with the National Association of Music Merchants. Headliner performing groups include Boston Brass and Billy's Brass Band. You can also attend events such as late night jazz, the Community Drum Circle, and Get America Singing. Collegiate students can look forward to a CMENC reception and special sessions presented by Willie Hill; Dr. Tim Lautzenheiser; and Mel Clayton, National

MENC Past President. Don't forget the education sessions for each curriculum area and Music Industry Council sessions. Finally, concerts presented by talented performing groups range from elementary students to outstanding collegiate, military, and community ensembles. Register now to ensure your participation in Portland.



Conference Planning

Teachers in National MENC leadership positions make a concerted effort to open up the lines of communication among the membership, leadership, and staff. With this in mind, here is some background on

how certain decisions are made during the planning stages for the Northwest Division Conferences.

Why do we hold the Northwest Conferences only in Portland, Spokane, and Bellevue? Each of these three cities has facilities large enough to house a conference of this nature. These cit-

ies are scheduled on a rotating basis in order to offer the conferences in various geographical locations. Even though some cities have conference sites (Boise, Missoula, Seattle, etc.), the Northwest Division Board agreed to utilize the current rotation of cities. Sites in Seattle appear to be too expensive for our delegates, and attendance was very low when the conferences were last held in Idaho and Montana. Your Northwest Division Board attempts to utilize the most cost-effective venues that can house all of the sessions, hotel rooms for attendees, honor groups, etc.

Why don't you use a better venue for the honor group concert? In the past few months some music teachers have expressed thoughts regarding the rehearsal and performance venues for the Northwest Division Honor Groups. It is a well-known fact that a ballroom is a less desirable venue for music performances. Each city presents a variety of challenges for performances. Portland's Keller Auditorium was unavailable on the dates of our conference. Even with a stage extension, the Schnitzer Concert Hall stage is too small to accommo-

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date the honor groups. (Band and Orchestra Instrumental ensembles are approximately 200 persons each; the mixed choir, 325; and the women's choir, 175). The Northwest Division Board leadership contacted a variety of teachers in the Portland area to explore the possibility of using a church for the choral ensembles. Unfortunately, no churches were large enough to hold the choral honor groups and audience. Also, these facilities were generally not available for rental on Sundays.

Why do we have such large numbers in the Northwest Division Honor Groups? Two years ago state presidents discussed the possibility of reducing the number of accepted students for the honor groups. The response was overwhelming — keep the groups the same size. Northwest Division leadership and members agreed at that time to maintain larger numbers so that as many students as possible could participate in a musical experience that might not otherwise be available to them. Reducing the number of performers in the

Honor Groups is an undesirable option. As long as the Honor Groups remain the size as they currently are, it may be necessary to use ballrooms for performances. Certainly opera houses, churches, and other performance sites will be explored when costs and schedules allow.

Why are some of the rehearsal sites so far away from the conference? Rehearsal sites are chosen to provide students a musical experience during their stay. They also must be user friendly for space considerations of the large number of students, busses, lunches, chaperones, etc. In Portland all of the rehearsal sites are within walking distance of the conference so that interested directors may observe the students and conductors.

Students who were selected to perform in the honor groups deserve your collective respect and support. Congratulations to all of you who had students accepted.

Reflections

Life is a continual process of growth and change. This may be the time to consider new options for future Northwest Division MENC Conferences and explore changes for 2005, which is scheduled for Bellevue, WA. Should you have a recommendation for any of the issues discussed here, please contact your state president, Northwest Division President-Elect Renee Westlake, or me. We will gladly take those suggestions to the Northwest Division Board to explore alternative approaches. I hope to see you in February!

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Advocacy—How Do You Play the Game?

I view advocacy as a combination of effective practice in the classroom, preventative maintenance, and negotiation.

Former OMEA Board President Dave Becker consistently maintains the position that the best advocacy we do for our programs is what happens every day in our classrooms. At the school and district level this is most certainly a "Truth to Remember." As in all classes, students who are "being fed" take that home to their parents—the movers and shakers in most districts. Signs of students getting fed are 1) that your brightest students continue to be challenged by something musical and plague you with insightful questions, 2) that your lowest achieving students are feeling and being successful, and 3) that students on both ends of the spectrum have appreciation and respect for each other. (If you "pass go," collect \$200.) I have become aware of the painful truth that not all programs that are cut are innocent victims—rather, they suffered the reverse Darwinian fate (demise of the weakest) of ineffective teaching. Careful introspection is a prerequisite to advocacy.

Preventative maintenance could be described as tastefully disseminating the right information to the right people. You can run the best program in the state, but unless you inform them about what is really taking place, you still will have people viewing it as just a good time with a charismatic teacher. Most people have not had a high-quality music experience and need extensive explanation as to why it is important.

Teacher evaluation sessions are a good example. Rather than just putting up with the process, try your best to educate administrators about the specific learning in your classroom and the complexity of that learning.

- Take as much time as you can get for pre- and post-observation meetings to discuss what the learning really is, on what levels

it takes place, what precedes and follows it, and why. (If you do not have that information readily in mind, you might want to GO FISH.)

- If you are in a high school, make sure every conversation with your Activities Director includes some specific one-liners about successes for students and how and why those successes were possible.



- When teachers compliment you on your program, engage them in conversation and make sure that they not only support what you do but that they also have the correct logic behind

that support.

- Parents in PTA, in parent conferences, and in booster groups need specific information about why what they know is good for their kids is good for their kids.
- At any age, students are surprisingly receptive to comments/discussions about why what we do is important to them on many levels.
- Also, at any level of teaching, don't be shy about calling your local newspaper when special things happen to your program or to the individuals in them. Kids doing well is news after all!

(If you "pass go," collect \$200.)

Negotiation is a huge topic. There is a logic system in negotiating that I have tried to understand. For example, several years ago some teachers told me they thought their district routinely brought up the subject of music cuts as a way not to have to cut it—the public outpouring of support saved them from accusations of capricious decision making in not cutting music. I still entertain myself trying to figure that one out.

I have adopted three maxims for my own purposes regarding negotiations that are, luckily, easier to grasp than that last example!

1. There are few "bad guys" out there making decisions. This maxim enables me to keep an open and friendly disposition to those who may for one reason or another be threatening the program.

There are, however, a lot of uninformed people making decisions. The net effect can often be the same—to use an analogy, "friendly fire" is just as lethal as that from an identified enemy. These people are in need of clear teaching and the right information—and, after all, this is what we, as teachers, do best! Your realization that people being uninformed is quite different from their being evil will facilitate the flow of this information. (If you "pass go," collect \$200.)

A third category of decision makers, unfortunately, are the people who felt like the losers in a previous power struggle that you may have thought you had won. (GO FISH.)

2. Avoid the "squeakiest wheel" approach, at least until near the end of unsuccessful negotiating. This is a near-end game tactic that, once employed, leaves few options to follow. This approach sets up a competitive dynamic among interest groups, which may not need to be there. Such dynamics become divisive and create many losers, most of them kids. The squeaky wheel system panders to poor logic in decision making by insuring that the loudest voices are a substitute for the best logic.
3. The "rising tide lifts all boats" analogy works in ebb tides as well—think and speak in terms of collaborating to keep your school society intact for the good of all.

In assessing what you have with which to negotiate, here is couple of questions to ask yourself:

- 1) "Does my program enhance our school's culture?" If the answer is "yes," work this angle every day, and consciously integrate that reality into what you teach your kids. Further, determine how you enhance your school's culture and to what extent. Who are likely to be your vocal supporters? Gently bring conversations with other teachers and administrators around to this realization as often as possible. (If you "pass go," collect \$200.)

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continued...

President's Column

2) "Is my program in competition with, or adversarial toward, other groups, administration, or the school in general?" (If this answer is "yes," GO FISH.)

Three more ideas to consider for successful, two-way negotiating:

1. Speak and think in terms of the good for the entire school, not just the good for your program. Remember, as in most successful relationships, "It's not about YOU."
2. Avoid drawing hard and fast lines in the sand—such a tactic can be only an absolute last resort and, even then, useful only if you are willing and able to fulfill the conditions you set forth.
3. If the topic under discussion is funding or program cuts, speak (and think) in terms of equitable cuts, as opposed to "No cuts for me."

What are your resources?

The role of parents:

Individual parents who are well informed and articulate about your program will have informal conversations with decision-makers at any appropriate chance meeting. This is probably one of your most important resources both in preventative maintenance and when things approach the wire. Groups of parents are a powerful force and are to be used only wisely and sparingly in near-last-resort situations. If you decide to call forth this force, you must have a clearly defined vision of what is happening and what needs to happen—apply the KISS (Keep It Simple, Stupid) principle here. Otherwise, you may unleash a powerful force that runs amuck because of lack of direction and causes great damage—the analogy that comes to mind is water harnessed to produce energy and irrigation versus a flash flood.

Your parents are best served if they are not representing solely band, choir, or even the music department, but rather as broad a base of interest as possible. Utilize parents who have multiple interests upon which to build coalitions with other groups.

The role of students:

Nothing puts you and your students in a worse light than for you to tell them what to say and to send them forth as pawns in the game. They then can be easily discounted and your image can suffer for "using" them.

You must teach them to find their own voice. This takes time, but it is rewarding.

Guidelines for them? The same as yours!

- Avoid the "language of attack"—it only builds defenses. Not only must they avoid the language, they also must practice avoiding the thought processes that are reflected in the language. The act of practicing language patterns also trains thought patterns. You can help them through role-playing or meaningful dialogue.
- Strive to become honest and open listeners—they might hear something that alters their perceptions for the better (you too).

- Always strive for win-win solutions, solutions that leave no "losers."

Other resources

If you have contact with former students who are now adults, they can be a powerful and willing voice in the defense of your program. Being adults, their opinions no longer can be discounted as can those of your current students, and they can give articulate and passionate testimonials about what their involvement in your program has done for them. Especially important are the many students who are no longer active musicians.

In summary, having tried to process all of these thoughts, I would posit that effective advocacy is the culmination of the long-term perceived value of your program in combination with the quality of your working relationships within your school district and parent groups. The one provides a base of credibility, and the other provides many avenues to reach those who need to hear the message. It is a process and the results depend upon how you play the game. (If you "pass go," collect \$200.)

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for Music Education**



For What It's Worth

The purpose of the *Oregon Music Educator* is to help and inform. I don't know if what I have to share will do either, but I am compelled to write anyway.

I have written a series of articles on the intrinsic value of music education—articles that extol the search for excellence for art's sake rather than for a trophy. You have heard the message many times before and I hope that my spin on the subject was not just more of the “same old stuff.” I have to say that this past fall has made me take a hard look at myself and ask if I really can practice what I preach. I came into this year knowing that change was inevitable—it has been a difficult fall at best.

After 8 years I no longer have a daughter in my band. My principal, who was a friend, has retired, and my assistant as moved on. For those who have followed my band over the past 3 years, you know that I have been blessed with talented kids and that last year I had a very special group from which I graduated 40 seniors. Many have gone on to pursue degrees in music. These graduates left behind a legacy at Westview High School, but their leaving also created a void that will be difficult to fill.

This fall started like all falls with marching band. This year my band is weak. There is no way to sugar-coat it; they are young and weak. As we progressed through the competitive season, I preached to the kids, “Don't worry about scores, work hard, strive to excel and good things will happen.” I continued my mantra to them, “We are doing this to have fun, not to win or beat other bands.” As the weeks progressed, the band did not—at least from a competitive standpoint. We went from 6th to 7th to 10th. It was after the 10th place finish that I had to ask myself if I really believed what I was saying to the students. I started to blame myself for the band's lack of success—not my circumstances.



We have all been in that position. You come up with all the reasons to encourage and uplift the students, but inside you are asking yourself if you are losing your grip and if you still have what it takes to teach. Fatigue set in. (At 50, I find I can no longer keep up the

pace as I did at 35.) To make matters worse, the week before our 10th place finish, my dog of 10 years became ill and I had to put her to sleep. I was at a very low point. I was losing the perspective that 23 years of teaching is supposed to give. It was then that these same “weak musician” kids came through. Don't get me wrong,

they didn't perform any better, they still made the same dumb mistakes and had the same immature sound. What they demonstrated was a new selflessness that had been lacking. I experienced the heart of youth unaffected by the cynicism of age. They rallied around me when I was down. They gave me flowers, left me messages of love and support, and showed me how much of a family we are. They reminded me once again of the reason why I teach.

In that week and the days following, my young band amazed me with their resilience and joy of performance. They knew that they were not even close to being the best. They also knew that they weren't going to rise in the standings. That was OK with them. They just wanted to continue performing because of what performance did for them. They were succeeding because they were giving their best and their best was the excellence that I had been demanding. The best part was they were having fun in spite of me and my own insecurities! (Wow, talk about an object lesson!) Their joy shifted my attention from myself and back onto my job as a teacher of children and a trainer of leaders. I teach life skills through performance. It doesn't matter whether my ensembles are at the top or the bottom—the lessons are the same and just as important.

I don't know whether this insight makes any sense to you. I do know that I have been

through a very therapeutic experience and have a renewed passion for teaching. The point of all this is to urge you to listen to your students: not their whining or complaining, but their joy in applying the skills you taught them in the classroom in performance. Also, remember what important influences we are in their lives. They watch us and emulate us. We are role models and that is an awesome thing. The interaction between student and director is very special and must be cherished and nurtured.

Parent Groups— Practical Advocacy

Having an active parent group is vital to the success of our programs. I use mine extensively. In fact, it is my parent group who makes it possible for me to teach. I would not have the time to study scores and work with students if I didn't have my parents. They volunteer a huge amount of time to ensure that all behind-the-scenes activities necessary to make a large program run are accomplished. Good parents want to be a part of what their kids are involved in. Performing groups offer an excellent opportunity for parents to take on an active role in their children's development. As in all organizations, it is a few participants that do the bulk of the work. There are always those few out there—they are only waiting to be asked.

I organized my first parent group when I started my career at Aloha High School. Two parents stepped forward to help (this is long before competitive marching band with its pit crews, etc.). These two parents recommended two others, who recommended two others. With this fledgling group we organized the rest. We did the usual trips and fundraisers. Soon it became apparent that an organized structure was necessary to become more efficient. We contacted other schools that had highly effective parent groups. At that time those schools were Sunset High School and Sprague High School. We drafted a constitution modeled after Sunset's, filed for non-profit status with the State of Oregon, and elected officers.

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This is a list our parent group officers and a breakdown of their duties:

- President—organizes the parent group meetings, helps establish the next year's budget, and ensures that all necessary duties are carried out.
- Vice-President—assists the president and prepares for his or her own year at the helm. This is actually a "president-elect" position.
- Secretary—keeps track of the minutes of meetings.
- Treasurer—keeps track of all earned income and operational expenses, and keeps me from spending too much. This job is perhaps the most intense. My budget is in the tens of thousands per year. We charge each marching-band student \$250 (and each non-marcher \$150) to participate. In addition we fund raise over \$25,000 per year.
- Fund-Raising Chair—helps organize and facilitate any and all band fundraising events.
- Chaperone Chair—works with other adult volunteers to ensure that there are two parents on each bus when we travel. I let the parents take care of their kids as they travel. I no longer travel on long bus rides—I ride in the comfort of my car. I tell students that they are in this for only 4 years, and I, on the other hand, am in it for the long haul, and riding school busses will most assuredly shorten my tenure!
- Uniform Chair—heads a crew that distributes and retrieves the band uniforms at each performance. They also maintain, clean, and repair them (this includes inspections at each performance).
- Pit Crew Chair (for our competitive marching bands)—organizes a group to load and unload the truck of equipment for our competitions. They also set up the equipment and tear it down before and after the performances, respectively. An added bonus is that they help repair equipment, such as the wheels on the mallet instruments. They make carts, trailers, and boxes to store and haul instruments and

uniforms. My pit crew also built shelves and storage units in my band room.

- Other parent duties have included making programs and posters for concerts, ushering at concerts, monitoring ticket sales, recording concerts, writing newsletters, and running a web page. The list is endless.

I could not run my program without my parent group. I am astounded that there are schools that have no such organization.

My parents have become so organized and good at what they do that they now are funding large-scale instrument purchases. The outside funding program started years ago for uniform purchases. Since then, we have been able to purchase over \$20,000 worth of badly needed percussion equipment for my symphonic program. This year we started with a surplus in the bank. In addition, they send me to Chicago each year to the Mid-West Band Clinic. They believe it is necessary that I go so they pay for it. They fund my small ensemble program, hiring the necessary instructors to come in and help coach the kids. It's a wonderful thing and they love doing it.

I know many of you are thinking that it is the competitive marching band that generates this kind of organization. You are correct in that thought, though my parent group goes well beyond the boundaries of the marching band. I maintain that any group, choir, orchestra, or band can establish a parent group. Parents want to be involved.

While choirs and orchestras may not have the massive manpower needs that a large

marching program typically does, these programs still have needs. If you travel at all, you need help with funding and chaperoning. If you perform at any level, you need help with programs, recording, crowd control, and uniforms. I think we, as teachers, spin our wheels too much. By having a parent organization, we spread out the multitude of responsibilities to many instead of assuming the entire burden ourselves.

We also established our own advocacy group. When Proposition 5 was passed and the Beaverton School District threatened to cut all music programs, the parent groups from Sunset, Beaverton, and Aloha High Schools stormed the school board meetings en masse. Hundreds of voices were heard. We survived.

I would be most happy to share the nuts and bolts of my parent organization with anyone who wishes to either start a group or would like help making their groups more effective.

Michael Burch-Peses Second Vice President

Second VP's Column

This is an exciting time for me in that I am busily contacting adjudicators for the State Solo Contest and preparing for a concert performance at the MENC Northwest Division conference. When anyone asks me what I'm doing these days, I usually say I'm trying to do my part to spread the good word about music and its importance in our lives.

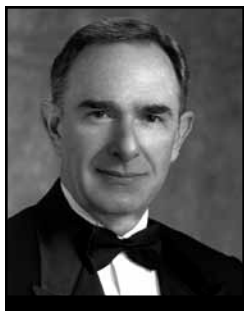
The State Solo Contest

Anyone who wishes to gauge the value of music in the life of a high-school student needs only look at those who take part in our State Solo Contest. These accomplished vocalists and instrumentalists comprise only a fraction of those involved in making music in our high schools. Each of them displays levels of poise and musicianship that are truly wonderful to see. They didn't reach this high level of personal development without hard work and personal sacrifice; they are, in fact, living testaments to the fact that music improves overall intellectual development. Their level of excitement at taking part in the contest further speaks to their sense of accomplishment, regardless of their final score.

At the end of the day they will say it was all

worthwhile.

None of this surprises music teachers. Music educators agree unanimously that music introduces concepts to develop the mind that also have broad application in other areas of life. For example, music helps students develop discipline and perseverance, qualities essential to their success as performing musicians. Their determination to keep working on a particularly difficult passage until they master it not only helps students in their quest to get to the state solo contest, but also



it will prove to be an invaluable asset when they strike out on their own and seek success as an adult.

The MENC Conference

Speaking of adults, I'm enormously proud that the Oregon Symphonic Band (OSB) has been selected to play at the MENC conference in February. Every one of the adults in OSB would be happy to talk your ear off about the impact that music has had on them throughout their lives. Many members are not music teachers or professional players—software engineers, librarians, railroad engineers, policemen, retirees, stock brokers, and book keepers also play in OSB—yet there

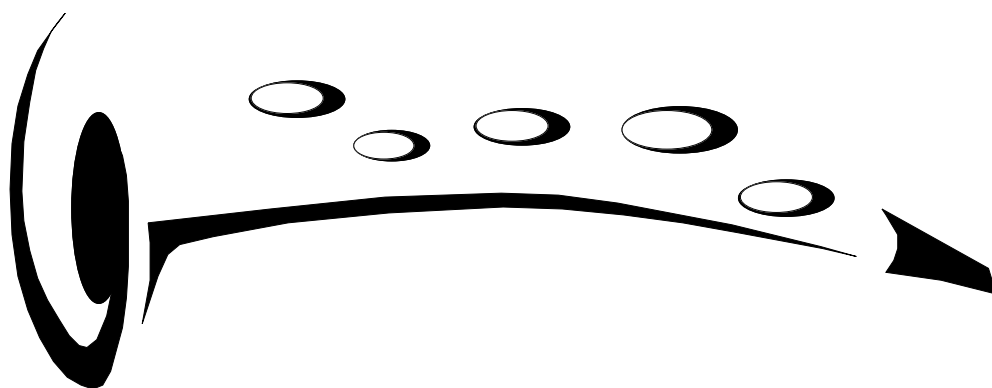
is no question that music is essential to their quality of life.

Everyone in the OSB undoubtedly went through exactly the same process that is now shaping the students who hope to perform at Oregon's State Solo Contest. They probably participated in their own state solo contest early in their own musical development. The skills they learned at that time, and continued to hone through the years have led them to a new high point: their upcoming performance at our MENC Division conference.

At the end of the day they will say it was all worthwhile.

All the students and adults I've mentioned have a number of things in common engendered by their mutual love of music: self-discipline and self-motivation, commitment, patience, self-confidence and poise, perseverance, a sense of personal responsibility, coordination skills, goal setting, achievement, enjoyment, and enthusiasm. Aren't these pretty good reasons to cite when explaining music and its importance in our lives, regardless of one's age?

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Introduction: A Time to Advocate

Obviously Oregon is a state in transition. We're not sure where we are going, but music educators know we cannot stay where we are. As individuals, teachers, and members of OMEA, we have the opportunity to inspire others and improve the role of music education in the public schools through our advocacy efforts.



It has been very rewarding to see political advocacy become a higher priority in the OMEA and to see our efforts bring some rewards. Even though there was not much gained in the November 2002 election, there were positive changes in the way education issues were presented to the voters.

The Oregon Education Association (OEA), especially, did an outstanding job of getting information to the general public about issues related to school funding. We are making progress. Slow it may be—but it is progress. Unfortunately, this is only the beginning. There is still a great deal left to do to bring music education back to levels that were once enjoyed in Oregon's schools.

Exposition: Present the Themes

When you become inspired to advocate for your students' needs, here are some important things to keep in mind:

- Know what you want to do. You must select your advocacy topic carefully and

research it thoroughly. It is possible to spend a great deal of time, energy, and money and end up with undesired results.

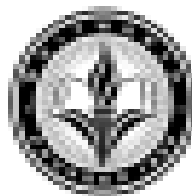
- Know whom you want to influence. Once you identify your goal, take the time to select the people you want to motivate. Asking the wrong people is unproductive.
- Inspire others to join you. In most situations, on your own you will not have the time or influence to do the work that is required. Parents, students, local businesses, other art groups, and political forces can make your work easier and more effective.
- Pick a strategy. Match your target and resources with an effective advocacy strategy. Learn about all the parties and issues involved, and select the most efficient and effective methods to influence others.
- Carry out your plan. Whether your plan

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is to advocate for music classes in your school, your district, your city, or the state, it will most likely take a significant amount of time to reach your goal. Don't be discouraged by small defeats. Keep your students nearby to inspire you.

Development: Inspiration for Advocates

While writing this article, I consulted with friends in Eugene who have been on the front lines of education funding. Granted, their stories reflect only one community in Oregon. Eugene is mostly an urban area and is lucky to have colleges and universities in the area. The political climate may differ from where you live. Be that as it may, these observations and recommendations will still be informative to readers outside Lane County.

Part One: A Success Story from Eugene—Ballot Measure 20-67

Inspired by similar efforts in Portland and Ashland, a concerned group of citizens in Eugene drafted and presented to the voters a proposal for a 4-year local option tax for youth/school-based services. In the November 5 General Election, the ballot measure known as 20-67 passed by 53% to 47%. Approximately 93% of the funds raised will be given to the Eugene and Bethel School Districts for several types of activities, including music programs.

Jean White, a South Eugene orchestra parent, helped draft and pass the measure. Jean worked long hours to help with the victory. She explained that the support of the Eugene voters reflected the city's longstanding commitment to quality education. Jean's two children have participated in school orchestra classes since 4th grade. During that time, she has seen Eugene music programs take devastating hits. With no other obvious solutions in sight, it was necessary to look for other funding solutions. As a result of local effort, there was a happy ending and some temporary relief for Eugene's schools.

Part Two: Helpful Words from an Administrator who Cares

As an advocate and strong supporter of school music programs, South Eugene High School Principal Jerry Henderson offered advice for advocates. During his distinguished career as a public school administrator, he served as principal at elementary, middle, and high schools. Jerry has consistently demonstrated the essential support required to include a strong music curriculum in his schools. Jerry urges advocates always to focus on the needs of the students. Too often it is easy to lose sight of our priorities. Very few people want to hear about a school-related topic if the proposal doesn't include the children. He also suggests that advocates look for matching funds, trade-offs, and partnerships to take advantage of all the resources available. Finally, make your requests realistic and don't ask for too much. We would expect caution about asking for too much, but Jerry suggests that we also avoid asking for too little. Imagine having your request granted only to realize you fell short in your estimation of the needed funds. As a closing remark, Jerry suggests that it is good not to be too aggressive. Energies and passions can be channeled in any number of ways that may be equally effective.

Part Three: Look to the Coalition for School Funding Now!

Parents will ask you how they can help. If their intentions are directed toward efforts at the state level, I recommend sending them to the Coalition for School Funding Now! A quick visit to their website (www.schoolfunding.org) will be inspiring. The Coalition was founded in 1996, and their work is directed at building an effective coalition from the many diverse school districts throughout Oregon. Rather than pitting district against district, the Coalition works to help focus on a single message: adequate and stable funding for ALL K-12 schools in Oregon. The Coalition seeks to find long-term solutions and bring

together a broad mix of advocates, several of whom are at the forefront for the first time.

Part Four: Our Business Partners Are There To Help

Whenever I prepare to present advocacy material or visit a legislator, I stop by Pacific Winds in Eugene. Pacific Winds is a wonderful music store where you always feel welcome. Proprietor Willie Knaus and his staff are long-time advocates for Eugene music teachers and students. Willie devoted a large portion of his booth at the most recent OMEA Conference in Eugene to this effort. That same commitment exists everyday at Pacific Winds. Through Willie Knaus, I have learned about such organizations as the National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM) (www.namm.com) and the American Music Conference (www.amc-music.com). Both of these music merchant organizations can provide effective advocacy materials through their websites. Maybe the single most useful tool for advocacy is the *Music Educators Advocacy Kit* available to music educators from NAMM at no cost. Talk to your local and state music retailers and suppliers—they have a vested interest in your classes and can be strong allies.

Part Five: Fight for Ballot Measure 28

What's next for state pro-education advocates? Measure 28 will appear on a special State election in January 2003. Because they were so involved with their efforts during the November 2002 election, some districts in Oregon may not have heard much about Measure 28.

Measure 28 would increase both corporate and personal income taxes for 3 years. After a 3-year period, the measure restores the existing income tax rates. It is estimated that this measure will increase Oregon personal income taxes for the average personal income taxpayer by \$114. Pro-education advocates, such as the OEA, are urging Oregon voters to vote "yes" on Measure 28 to increase the

income tax rates for the next 3 years. While OMEA does not officially endorse candidates and measures, it does strongly encourage its members to be informed.

Recapitulation: What Choice Do We Have?

Is it possible that we will win the battles better than we expected and surprise even ourselves? With the momentum that appears to be building, it may be possible to paint a brighter future than any of us might imagine. By drawing the voters into their schools and building stronger alliances, new and improved curriculum might lie ahead. Of course, two important components for better Oregon schools are more teachers and smaller class loads.

To reach new goals, music educators will need to think "outside the box." We need to find new ways to prevail upon the voters to support our work. Simply doing what we've done for many years is not acceptable. We might need to look to our younger colleagues and use their expertise to bring technology into every music classroom and replace our current performance-based music curriculum with a broader approach that truly does bring music to every student at every level.

Certainly the challenges are there. While you rise up to meet them, keep in mind that it has never been easy for the artist. There has always been an element of suffering attached to achieving what we believe in. Today is no different!

I am encouraged and inspired by what is happening in other parts of the country. Los Angeles recently adopted a 10-year plan to rebuild its arts program at an estimated annual cost of \$190 million when fully implemented. Chicago has announced that it is converting 47 neighborhood elementary schools into arts magnets. Baltimore's mayor has made arts education one of three educational priorities and backs a school board plan to target \$93 million in added arts funding by 2005. Is it possible that Oregon's schools will rebound and recreate an even better music

curriculum in its schools?

I am convinced that advocacy for music education is vital. Oregon has lost its vision of a quality education system and the State Legislature has completely and utterly failed to address the problem of school financing. My hope is that sanity and common sense will return and we can be a part of the success story. The alternative is not acceptable.

Coda: The Emerging Advocacy Role of OMEA?

Decisions made by OMEA members and the governing Board will decide our involvement in local and State advocacy efforts. Recent developments, such as the creation of the OMEA website, have the potential of contributing to our ever-expanding effort. My recommendations include having OMEA join with other appropriate pro-education organizations to build stronger coalitions. I would also like to see OMEA lend public support to candidates and ballot measures. And lastly, I want to see all of us give time and energy to "thinking outside the box." How do we fashion a stronger bond between the voters and the schools? Music educators might find themselves on the cutting edge. After all, there are very few other educators who truly touch the lives of their students (and their parents) as OMEA members. Whatever we do as an association, I encourage all of you to make advocacy a high priority. The time is now.



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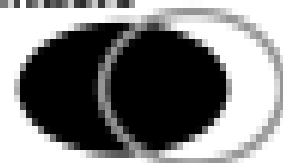
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A Hierarchy of Advocacy

It is no secret that our school funding from the State is a big issue affecting all of us right now. Budgets are shrinking, student contact hours are diminishing, and administrators are forced to make tough decisions. As educators, often times we are forced to fight to keep what we have. As many of our schools try to cope with the State's funding problems, the issue of advocacy becomes more important than ever.



The first step to effective advocacy is strong support for our band programs. Our goal should be to make our programs so much of an integral part of the school that we, the band directors, are not the only advocates. This sense of shared resources creates a bet-

ter starting point from which to advocate. As Maslow created a *Hierarchy of Needs*, so too do we, as educators, need to establish a "Hierarchy of Advocacy." This hierarchy can help guide us through the big issues of support and advocacy.

Where do we start? We start at the most important place of all: the classroom.

Accordingly, the foundation of this hierarchy is encouraging our students to believe in what they are doing—it is the teacher's primary job in any classroom.

Each rehearsal gives us the opportunity to make kids believe in themselves and feel successful. Highlight the good things that they do. We can use posters and notes on the board to congratulate them for their achievements. We need to praise students

following their performances. When we have long class periods, we need to make sure that we have a good change of pace somewhere in the period. Many times I lose sight of the fact that my students still are kids. We need to always be ready to share a story, preview an upcoming event, do some listening, and, most importantly, share a laugh. The more successful our students feel, the stronger the groundwork is for advocacy. Once we feel that we are running healthy rehearsals in which students are engaged in quality music making, the next step of the hierarchy will come into view: parental and school support.

Developing support for our students from parents and our school administrators should be well on its way. If our students believe in themselves, they will let parents and friends know. There are many opportunities available to us to help further this advocacy. For example, we can use morning announcements to let the school know of our successes these successes can include evening performances, performances at festivals, honor band members, solo festival participants, and college scholarship recipients. We can put invitations to school performances in teacher and administrator mailboxes. We need to perform for our student body at least once a year. And, we need to let everyone in our school know what a great group of students we have. Our music students will develop pride in their organization. Our goal should be to make our program an integral part of the school and something the school is proud to be associated with. Once everyone understands our vital role in the school, we are in a much better position to advocate for what we need. We also gain the backing of proud parents and a supportive teaching staff.

The next level of this hierarchy is gaining the support of our community. By the time our program is well established in the school, many members of the community will already be aware of our successes. Our students and parents have spoken to friends and other family members. Gaining the support of such a large group can seem like a huge task. A good way to start is to post concert

continued on page 20

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Band Column

continued...

dates in local papers. At Barlow High School, our band prints posters showing all of our concert dates and distributes these to area businesses. Other things we can do include performing student solo and small ensemble recitals at community centers or retirement facilities, and looking for events around town that our ensembles can take part in. Keeping in touch with alumni is also a good community networking tool. Our goal at this level is the same as the previous two: get people to see our students being successful in what they accomplish. The public hears enough from the media about the bad things that happen in schools; we need to show them that music is a place where kids can be successful. These are the people who vote in local elections to fund our schools. Let them be our advocates as well.

The final level of this hierarchy of advocacy is at the State level. This level can be daunting. The first step should simply be to be

visible at district and state functions. Having students participate in district solo as well as ensemble festivals will make more people aware of the quality of our program and the dedication we have for our students. Attending our state and regional conventions should be something we commit to as well. These conventions not only revitalize us as teachers, but they also enable us to network with other educators throughout the state. We need to invite other directors from around the state to work with our students as well. Our kids will enjoy having a new face, and the guest director will become familiar with the hard work we are doing. News of a good band will travel back with the guest conductor. We need to be sure that our students' successes at this level are always reported back to parents, teachers, and the community. Our advocates need to know. I also believe that a very important step at this level is being actively involved in organizations like OMEA and the Oregon Band Directors Association.

Working with these organizations enables us to be advocates for a very large group of students as well as teachers.

When some of us think of advocacy, we think of defending what we have and justifying what we do. A good portion of our public is already aware of the studies linking music education to higher test scores. Instead of quoting statistics, I think the best road we can take towards effective advocacy for our students is simply to teach as best we can. Teaching with passion, combined with showcasing the success of our students paves the way for everything else.

Paul Nickolas is a recent arrival, from the Midwest and is in his third year teaching at Sam Barlow High School in Gresham.

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OMEA 1st Vice-President
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I trust you have had a successful fall and holiday season. As I write, I am deep in the middle of preparing end-of-year concerts, holiday music, and all of the other aspects of the season that make our lives so busy and rewarding.

I would like to thank Carol Young for her service as the Choral Music Chair over the past several years. Her contribution to our state has been excellent; she leaves a rather impressive legacy to follow.



high-school singers in Oregon. It is truly a credit to the quality of teaching that is going on in many schools. I would also like to thank the screeners who worked so hard on listening to the hundreds of tapes.

Also, I want to tell you about the conductors who will be working with our students at the conference in February.

Randal Swiggum, who will conduct the mixed chorus, is a composer, conductor, educator, and frequent clinician at both orchestral and choir festivals. In

addition to being the Music Director for the Elgin Youth Symphony Orchestra, he also taught at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Lawrence University Conservatory of Music, and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

Jonathan Talberg, the clinician for the

women's choir, serves as Director of Choral, Vocal, and Opera Studies at California State University at Long Beach. In addition to an extensive conducting resume, he also has had a successful performing career in musical theater. I know Jonathan as a friend and colleague, and I am thrilled for our students. He is a very exciting clinician who will make the experience memorable.

OSAA State Solo Competition

Several years ago the OSAA adopted an OMEA recommendation to move the OSAA State Solo Competition to different sites in the state including Eastern and Southern Oregon. While this past year's competition was certainly hosted successfully by Southern Oregon University, OSAA considered it financially unsuccessful and asked the OMEA Board to consider recommending that the competition remain in the Willamette Valley. The Board voted to support OSAA's request and several sites were mentioned as possible replacements for the planned 2004 competition at Eastern Oregon University. These sites are being investigated and a 2004 site soon will be named.

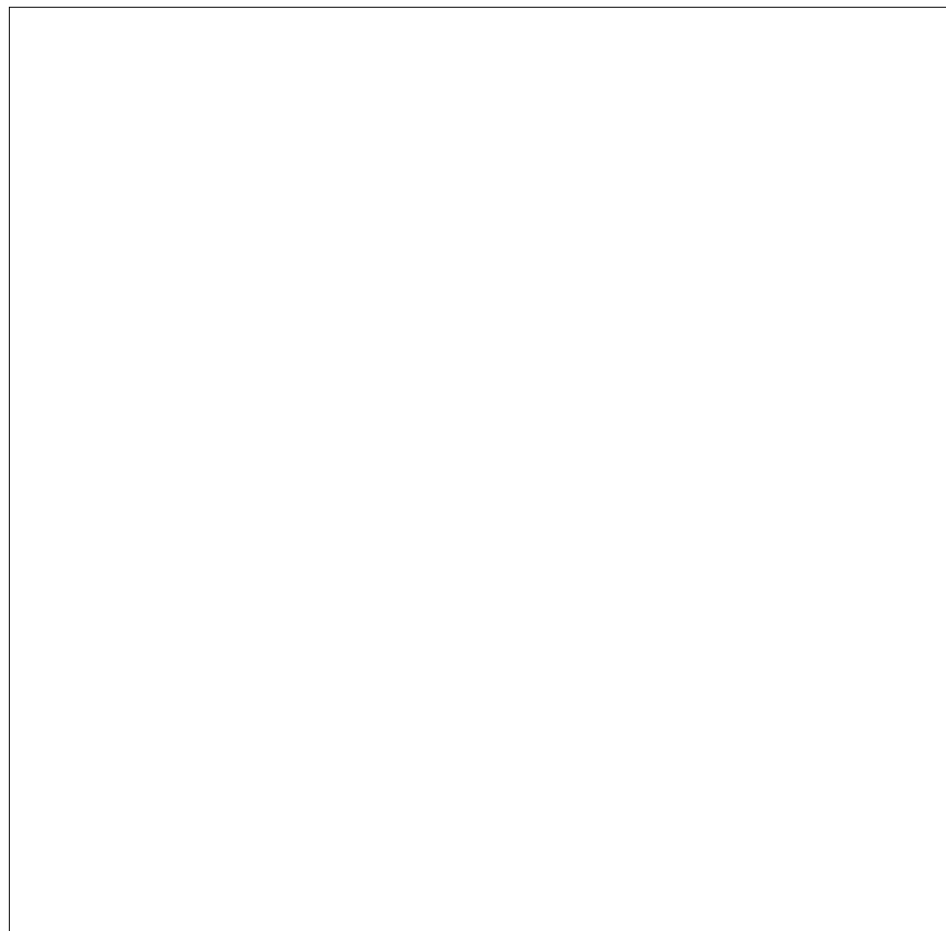
OSAA Choir Championships

Matt and Naomi Strauser have agreed to act as co-chairs of the OSAA Choir Championships on a 2-year appointment. Matt has been very involved in the festival for a number of years as both a participant and a conductor. He brings not only experience but also a commitment to making the competition fair and rewarding. He is currently the Director of Choral Activities at Western Baptist University and has begun doctoral studies at the University of Oregon. Naomi is recognized throughout the state for being an excellent organizer and has often been seen at choral events volunteering both her time and her smile.

Steven Zielke is in his fourth year as the Director of Choral Studies at Oregon State University.

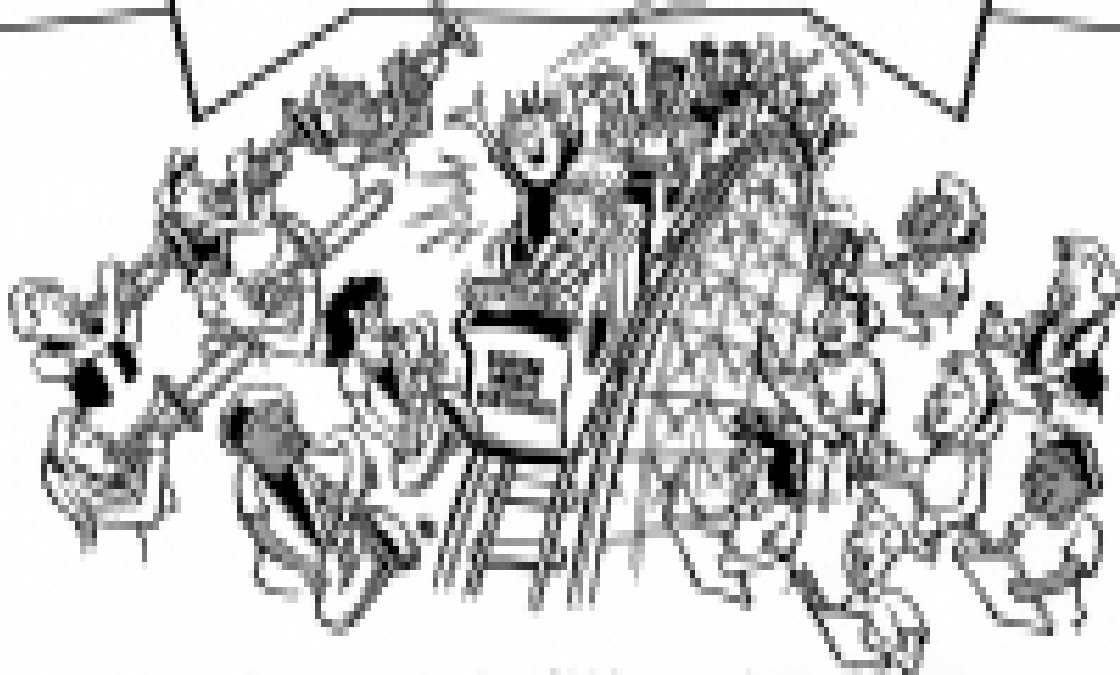
All-Northwest Honor Choir Auditions

By the time you read this, the selection of singers for the All-Northwest High School Honor Choir will have been completed. Thank you for sending the tapes, and let me offer my congratulations on the quality of



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New for 2003!

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- Saturday, April 26
- Friday, May 9

No. Cal. Dates

- Friday, May 9
- Saturday, May 16
- Saturday, May 17

Mention the word “advocacy” at a meeting, and people respond much the same way they do when Brussels sprouts are served at Thanksgiving dinner. We know that said vegetables won’t hurt us, and have, in fact, many health benefits, but we’d just as soon pass them along to someone who will really enjoy them, thank you very much. More mashed potatoes, anyone?

The simple fact is, if advocacy is left to the talented few who have stepped up to speak on our behalf, the decision-makers (the Legislature, school boards, district administration) will assume that the lack of numbers indicates a minority opinion. Richard Long, our OMEA State Advocacy Chair, is an articulate and intelligent leader, but he can’t (and shouldn’t have to) take a solo on this gig. It is time for each and every one of us to make our voices heard. More importantly, it is time to help our students’ parents participate in effective advocacy as well. They are the patrons in the education “business.” Their opinions cannot be easily dismissed as representing “special interests,” which is often the case when only teachers speak out in support of music programs.

At this point, you may be one of the many who are thinking, “I’m not a public speaker. I’m not good at expressing my thoughts. I’m an elementary music teacher, and we don’t have a music booster club at my school. How can I be an effective advocate?” Fortunately, there are just as many avenues for advocacy as there are alternative vegetables that will provide vitamin C, iron, and fiber. There is a place for everyone at the advocacy table, so let’s dig in.

You’re not comfortable speaking in public? In this electronic information age, your opinion and thoughts can be organized and sent with just a few keystrokes via email. Most elected officials publish their email addresses, and it is an effective way both to share your thoughts and provide documentation. Be sure to send your message before the scheduled committee or board meeting at which the music program will

be discussed so that the deliberations can reflect your input. A friendly phone call to your representative can also be effective.



The Oregon Education Association (OEA) has made communication with legislators much simpler. The “cyberlobby” on the OEA website is very user-friendly and includes sample emails you can use as templates or as springboards for your own thoughts. If redistricting has left you unsure, it will even tell you who your senator and representative are. Visit the site at www.oregoned.org, click on “Contact Your Legislator,” and follow the prompts. It’s quick and easy and you don’t have to wait until the switchboard opens to register your opinions.

Writing is difficult for you? Sign up to speak at school board meetings. Invite passionate parents to do the same. Most boards limit those testifying to just a few minutes, so you do not need to rival George Washington’s First Inaugural Address. This is not a filibuster situation. Decide upon a few very important points, state them, support them, thank the board for their attention, and sit down. It is very helpful if you can arrive in time to hear the testimony that precedes yours, so

that you can avoid duplication and speak to a different facet of the issue if need be.

You feel as if you’re “tooting your own horn” when you ask parents to advocate? Focus on the fact that this really isn’t about you at all. It’s not even about saving your job. It is about the value and importance of music education. Teachers come and teachers go, and if support is “teacher-based,” it will follow him or her, leaving the school or the district without a reason to continue a program when a dedicated and popular teacher moves on. Encourage parents to cite examples of the positive impact music (rather than the teacher) has made in the lives of their own children.

You don’t have time to collect research, data, etc., so that your parents will be prepared to relate specific benefits? The Music Educators National Conference (MENC) has done that work for you! Invest in the MENC *Music Education Advocates’ Toolkit* and share it with your parents. The cost to OMEA/MENC members is \$30.00 plus shipping—a bargain, when you compare it to the amount of time it will save you!

Your school is too small to support its own music booster club? Join forces with the music booster clubs at your middle and high

continued on page 24...



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schools to create a district-wide organization dedicated to advocacy. My own district did just that a few years ago. When the school board was proposing massive cuts last June, the Friends of Music tapped into the individual middle and high schools' music-booster email lists. In addition, they asked each elementary music teacher to send at least one parent representative to their meetings and added their email addresses to the list. This structure facilitated our ability to get information throughout the district very quickly and, thus, allowed us to respond immediately to new proposals that were not in the interests of our students. Hundreds of parents and students swamped the boardroom and lined the street outside, waving signs and letting district officials know that music education is vital to our community.

This is by no means a comprehensive collection of ideas. There are so many other ways to garner support within your district, and I'm certain that my colleagues on the OMEA Board will share their successful experiences with you as well. I will, however, conclude with a few "talking points" that must be continuously and consistently shared with our elected officials:

- Music is NOT extra-curricular. It is defined as core curriculum at both the State and Federal levels. Students are now required to demonstrate proficiency in the arts as part of the Certificate of Initial Mastery. No such requirement exists for the chess club or the rally squad, which ARE extra-curricular.
- That being said, resist the temptation to suggest other program cuts in lieu of cutting the music program. Once you start down that slippery slope, it is very easy for administration and school boards to pit program against program and parent against parent, and no one wins. The message should be to solve the funding problem and provide for the students' educational needs. Period.
- There is no question that Oregon is in dire financial straits. However, once a program is cut, it is very difficult to reinstate. The suggestion that a program be eliminated "just until funding is restored" or even

"just for this year" is a fantasy. Such cuts have a way of becoming permanent. We've seen that happen time and again.

This week, I received word from many teachers that their districts were issuing pink slips in anticipation of the failure of the January ballot measure. Seventeen years ago, during the last great recession, I, too, was a casualty of a "reduction in force" action. It was painful then and is every bit as painful now to see our colleagues' careers interrupted through

no fault of their own. The antidote is action. Let's work together to preserve music education for all our children.

Dinner is served. Care for some broccoli?

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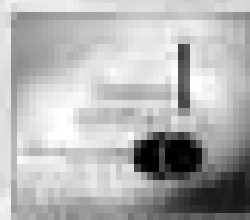
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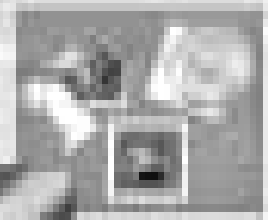


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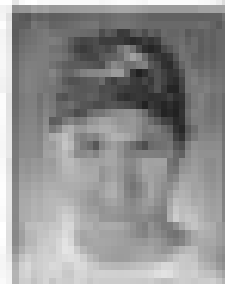
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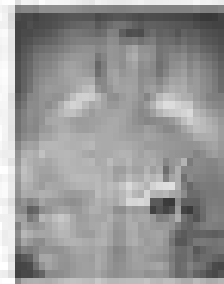
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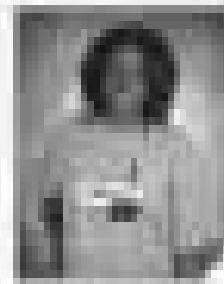
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A Message Delivered Over 2000 Years Ago

Advocating for music education is nothing new. Those familiar with the history of music education know that the Greeks were among the early advocates. According to their writings, Greek scholars understood the great value of teaching music to all children. They believed that music was governed directly by the mathematical laws connected to the organization of the universe. They believed that music affected everything and recognized that music builds human character, connects the heart to the mind, and places the human in a proper mental and physical balance. The "doctrine of ethos," as they called it, was founded on the conviction that music affects man's character, and that different kinds of music affect man's character in different ways. Granted, the Greeks were pretty strict about which types of music produced the appropriate and proper individual. Ultimately, the Greeks understood that the study of music was necessary to gain a path to higher intelligence, to create greater civility, and to enhance the state of man's soul.

Similarly, throughout history, advocates have written about the values of music. In the 19th century, German scholar Arthur Schopenhauer stressed that music had the power to transmit the person out of the mundane world towards universal truth. In America, our founding father of music education, Lowell Mason, advocated for music education in the public school, arguing that music contributed to the well being of the individual, and that music united the individual to his/her God. It seems that for over 2000 years scholars and philosophers have echoed the same consistent message: that the study of music incites individual and collective awareness, spawns creativity and self-expression, enhances the ability to discriminate and form opinions, increases the powers of thinking, and strengthens physical balance.



Is the public school curriculum de-evolving because of monetary funding? How will our society be affected as more and more Americans become musically illiterate? What will be the consequences to our greater humanity as the common person loses touch with his or her innate musical abilities because those talents are not nurtured and developed through education? Western culture has marveled at the intelligence and wisdom of the ancient Greek civilization so much that we modeled a modern society after their example. Why do we ignore their advice on education now, because of money? What kind of people

are we, and, more importantly, what kind of people will we become? A culture without music has no heart. Musical intelligence and artistic achievements are learned behaviors. Behind every great musician was, at some time, a caring teacher. In front of every great performer should be an audience informed enough to understand the musical message.



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The State Choir Sight-Reading Room

So, you made it to the state choir championships. Your performance on stage was the best work your group has ever done. Congratulations! Now, you are off to the sight-reading room. More joy? I have been observing groups in the sight-reading room for the past 3 years. Often directors tell me that the sight-reading experience is “not a good one.”



Let me offer some suggestions about how to make your sight-reading experience truly great so that it can be a fitting climax to your trip to the state festival.

Prepare your students! I have spoken to several directors who said, “This was our first time to State and we did not know what to expect.” Here are some ways to find out what to expect:

- Talk to other directors to find out what happens and what they do to prepare.
- Read the information at the OSAA website (<http://www.OSAA.org>). It has the sight-reading room script that tells you exactly what will happen and what the adjudicator will say and expect. Your school should have a copy—talk to the secretary or see your Athletic Director. It is the same book that contains the form you use to apply to the state contest.
- Carefully read all of the information you receive about the state contest. Do not assume things are the same as the year before.
- Coach your choir members on how to handle the sight-reading experience. The sight-reading room activity is not easy—do not lead your students to believe it is. It is very challenging. Help them to prepare for it. Let them know that all their skills and understanding of music notation will be needed to be successful. Make sight-reading an important part of each rehearsal.
- Prepare your students by training them to be good readers. It goes without say-

ing that the choirs that score best in the sight-reading room are the choirs that have prepared a well-rehearsed strategy. They know how to sight-read melodies with skips. They can read rhythms. They understand tempo changes, dynamic markings and articulations. The only way they will gain these skills is by your taking rehearsal time to train them. Did I already mention that you should make sight-reading an important part of each rehearsal?

- Are you not sure about how to teach sight-reading?

Should you use numbers, solfege or the “la, la, la” method? I think it is safe to say that any approach is better than not teaching reading at all. My experience from observing and from speaking to other directors indicates that numbers or solfege is the best method.

- Some directors complain that they teach in districts where students come into choir with little or no music background. They do not, for the most part, study voice, piano or any instrument privately. If students do not know a bass clef from a treble clef, you must teach them.

Some pointers about the room:

- Make sure you know which door and what side of the sight-reading room you will be entering. Use this information to make sure that your choir comes into the room in the right order. If you come in backwards you will want to switch around. This will take time and you will feel rushed and your students may be unsettled by the experience. Think about this. I have seen some veteran directors bring their choirs in backwards.
- Be aware of how many seats are in each row (about 20) in the sight-reading room and arrange your choir accordingly. You will probably want to do this so that your choir will be seated in sections. The large choirs need a definite plan before entering because your sight-reading room arrangement will most likely be different than your stage riser arrangement.

Some pointers on what to do before each exercise:

- For the pitched exercises, take time to get in the key. Some choir directors play by a very “strict” set of rules and give only “do” and do not let their students sing before the exercise. You should feel free to have them sing the scale or part of the scale. It would be wise to learn a simple chord progression (e.g. I-IV-I-V7-I) that you could run through to give your singers a good sense of the key. Be sure to give them the starting pitches of the exercise. If you prefer, let them hum their pitches. It is within the “spirit” of the game to do this. It makes no sense to stress your group by making them unsure about starting pitches. If you train your groups, then this preparation will take very little time and go a long way toward bolstering your group’s confidence.
- It is not within the “spirit” of the game to REHEARSE parts of the exercise before you sing them. Throwing a “ri” (raised 2nd) into the warm-up just because it is part of the exercise is going too far! Your warm-up should be designed to get your choir members into the key with a strong sense of “do.” Limit your warm-up to scales and normal chord progressions.
- Many choirs know solfege and hand-signs. This is great. Directors should use hand-signs only when giving starting pitches. Once you begin the exercise, you should not use any hand-signs under any circumstances! Again, use only “normal” hand-signs during the warm-up as you get the choir into the key. Using chromatic hand-signs or signing intervals that are not part of the normal warm-up is foul play.

Some pointers on performing each exercise:

- Do not go too fast. It proves nothing and will almost certainly not improve your score.
- If you must restart, sooner is better than later. Our procedures state that restart-

continued on page 30...

Sight-Reading Room

continued...

ing is OK, but they do not indicate that there is a scoring penalty. Many judges simply continue adding up the points (negative points), so restarting and making more errors only increases the deduction. Also, restarting near the end is not fair play because you have now practiced the exercise.

- Let the choir sit when possible to rest, but let them stand to perform the exercise. Standing helps their support and produces more tone. More tone gives the impression of confidence.
- When your choir stands, show them how to look at you (the director) first and then move their music into reading position. They must be able to see you (to remind and guide them) as you conduct the dynamics, articulations, fermatas, and tempo changes.
- Coach them to sing with joyful enthusiasm. Coach your students to make the judge believe that sight-reading is enjoyable to them and that they are thrilled to do it before him or her. If you cannot get your students to this point, you need carefully to rethink what you are teaching during your rehearsals and why you are taking your choir to State.

Some pointers about what to do after the sight-reading room:

- Do you whine about the sight-reading room experience? Stop whining and check your attitude. Are you whining about winning? If you are going to State to "win" then do not go to state! It is a privilege and an honor to be there. It means that your groups have attained a high standard of excellence in the choral art! Congratulations! It means that you and your group work as a team effectively to use your rehearsals to achieve your musical goals! Bravo! Make sure you prepare your groups to feel honored and privileged. The sight-reading room is a wonderful game. If you want to win, become a football coach and leave the choir to others who can prepare them for a good experience at state. I am not kidding.
- Do not "bad mouth" about the judge or festival to your choir. This is most certainly unprofessional. You are the role

model for your groups. Lead them by example to become citizens who know how to be mature. If you think the system can be improved, share your ideas in your festival evaluation form. The American Choir Directors Association and OMEA Boards look at these and evaluate every state festival. They are eager to make the festival better. Your input can help.

The sight-reading room can have a lasting and positive influence on your students and your program. Choirs that read well deserve to be proud. They have taken the time and effort to prepare their reading skills. All of these good outcomes are a direct result of what you as the choir director do to prepare your group.

It is not too late to start. We all have felt like saying, "I do not have time to teach sight-reading because we are too busy getting ready for our concert." If we were to spend more time teaching sight-reading to our choirs, they could learn the concert repertoire faster.

Teaching sight-reading has many benefits. It allows us the time to make our concerts more musical. It builds confidence in our choir members. It certainly gives our students the tools to do their best and to feel better about sight-reading at the festivals. Teaching sight-reading ultimately benefits your whole choral program and Oregon music education.

Teach your choir members the sight-reading part of musicianship. What they learn is your responsibility. The more they know, the better off you will be.

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Is the content of your music curriculum the best kept secret in your town?

Students in your classrooms are learning new things every day. Your kindergarten students are having a great time in music while they learn about beat and rhythm, fast and slow tempi, loud and soft dynamics, and sing songs from many cultures. Your older students may be composing their own melodies, orchestrating favorite songs, and improvising on conga drums. You know that you are teaching a valuable, sequential music curriculum, but does anyone else in your community also know this?

As we face challenging times in our profession, we wonder sometimes why parents, administrators, and community members seem not to appreciate the work that is going on in our music classrooms. Could it be that they do not know what learning is taking place there? If we want our community's support, we must show them that what we do is worth it. Before there is a crisis in our own schools, it behooves all of us to be proactive and to keep our various communities informed.

Communication is a powerful tool for building a strong support network for your music program. Here are some useful tools for sharing the value of music with your community.

Music Newsletter: Quarterly, I write and publish a music newsletter for each of my schools. In each newsletter, there are articles describing the current focus of each grade level and how that focus addresses the *National Standards for Music Education* and the *Oregon Benchmarks for the Arts*. I believe it is important for parents to know that the activities in my music classes are driven by standards. A recent newsletter included articles on the Portland Opera Workshop's presentation of Rossini's *Cinderella* at one school, our study

of jazz and Mardi Gras, music activities for students to do at home, and a listing of the *National Standards for Music Education*. Each of my 600 students, all of my school board members, and all district administrators receive a copy of the newsletter.

Bring Your Parent to Music Day: During March "Music In Our Schools Month" celebrations, I hold a "Bring Your Parent to Music Day." Parents and other adults attend music class and participate in our activities. I carefully plan to include many aspects of the curriculum on that day. Students read rhythms and melodies, play instruments, compose short melodies, and folk dance. Parents often are amazed at the skills their children have developed.

Web Page: I have a music page on our school's website. I have also found excellent music pages on other school websites. The music pages may include activities for students and information about performances and curriculum, or information that chronicles special music events. Search the Internet for other schools' music web pages to gather ideas for your own. (When building your music web-page, check your district policy regarding student photos on the web.)

Newspapers: Local print media usually are anxious to cover special music events. Be sure to give the editor advance notice of your performances. Special classroom/academic units also might be of interest to the local newspaper. Activities that are unusual and focus on curriculum is excellent information to share with the media.

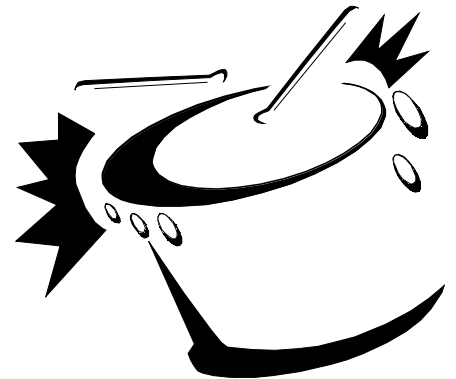
School Bulletin Boards: I take every opportunity to construct hallway bulletin boards with a focus on music. Each bulletin board highlights elements of our curriculum. All around the school, I often place seasonal cut-outs with music information, such as autumn leaves with rhythm patterns, Christmas trees with notes to read, and tulips with instruments to identify. The main purpose of these

reminders is to reinforce music learning, but they also help adults in the building notice that music learning is an ongoing process.

The *National Standards for Music Education*: In every concert program I list the *National Standards for Music Education*. The standards also are prominently displayed both on the wall of the gym during our performances and in the music room during open house.

Please share your communication ideas with other elementary music teachers by emailing them to fuller@columbia-center.org. I will post all of your ideas in the Oregon Society for General Music area of the Oregon Music Education Association (OMEA) website (www.oregonmusic.org). You can access this information by joining OMEA and then OSGM. Membership in OSGM is only \$1 for OMEA members. Check the OMEA website for membership information.

I encourage you to communicate and to be a highly visible part of your school and community. Let everyone know what you teach and how valuable that is to the students—and to them.



Oregon Society for General Music Registration

Oregon Society for General Music Registration

Last Name _____ First Name _____ M.I. _____

Mailing address _____

Home phone _____ Work phone _____

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School(s) where you teach _____

School address _____

Grade levels taught _____ How many years have you been teaching? _____

Special training (Orff, Kodaly, Dalcroze, etc.) _____

Skills you would be willing to share at an OSGM gathering (state or local level)

Office or board position in which you would be willing to serve OSGM

Mail to: Lynnda Fuller, OSGM President
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dpaul@kjos.com, www.kjos.com

Oregon State University School of Music
Tina Bull
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jkrueger@orst.edu,
http://osu.orst.edu/dept/music/

Oregon Symphony • Michael Kosmala
921 SW Washington, Ste. 200, Portland OR 97205
www.orsymphony.org,
mkosmala@orsymphony.org

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Faith@peeryproducts.com,
info@peeryproducts.com

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phowland@jwpepper.com,
www.jwpepper.com

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1119 SW Park Ave, Portland OR 97205
meiann@portlandyouthphil.org

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Showcase of Recent Research and Oregon Research Available for Music Educators

There are two opportunities for music educators to learn about recent research findings in our profession. First, the MENC Northwest Division Conference in Portland, February 14-16, 2003, will feature a Research Poster Session, with 16 recent studies completed in several locations throughout the United States. Second, research that was done by graduate students at the University of Oregon is being made available to the readership of the *Oregon Music Educator* and is detailed in the second half of this article.

The 16 posters appearing in Portland at the MENC Northwest Division Conference showcase 11 studies from Northwest states and 5 from other states. Martin Bergee, University of Missouri-Columbia, studied some variables that influence solo and ensemble festival ratings; Brian Ebie, University of Arizona, tracked some characteristics in research from the *Journal of Research in Music Education* for the last 50 years. Carl Hancock, University of Arizona, wrote on effective retention methods for pre-service and in-service teachers; and Daniel Johnson, University of Arizona, investigated how mathematical models can affect rhythmic instruction. Randall Royer, Black Hills State University, in Spearfish, South

Dakota, wrote about how sound pressure levels and frequencies generated in secondary public school band rooms affect teachers and students.

Within the Northwest, two papers come from Washington and nine come from Oregon. Steve Demorest, University of Washington; and Ann Clements, Susquehanna University, investigated vocal and perceptual pitch-matching skills of adolescent male singers. Steven Morrison, Mark Montemayor, and Eric S. Wiltshire, all from the University of Washington, looked at the effect of a recorded model on band students' performance self-evaluations, achievement, and attitude. Keith Koster, Eastern Oregon University, did an historical overview of gender issues and music education research.

Eight research studies came from the University of Oregon.

1. Shannon Chase investigated secondary choral music educators training, experience, and current teaching practice concerning foreign language diction and world music repertoire.
2. Hsiao-Shien Chen compared pitch and interval accuracy by 8- and 10-year olds living in Taiwan and Oregon through echo singing and xylophone playing.
3. Ching-Ching Lin Chou collected traditional Chinese children's singing games as a resource guide for general music.
4. Paul Doerksen surveyed current (2001-02) practices in beginning band and orchestra

programs throughout Oregon.

5. Randall Moore observed the effects of music on the behaviors of an autistic 5-year-old girl.
6. Ann Marie Musco reviewed the research on developing tone quality in bands.
7. Tia Pietsch and Luke MacSween compiled a literature review of effective practicing techniques for string players and vocal/choral settings.
8. Steve Posegate studied the effects of rhythmic or melodic clues on recognizing commonly known tunes.

Again, readers are encouraged to attend the MENC Northwest Division Conference February 14-16, 2003, and talk with the authors of these 16 research posters.

The second section of this report introduces music educators to selected research from 1989-2001 that is available from the University of Oregon School of Music. Readers are invited to contact Randall Moore at 541.346.3777, or rmoore@oregon.uoregon.edu, to obtain a copy of an article listed here. A small fee is charged for copies based on the number of pages and the costs for mailing for each manuscript pending author's permission. Studies are also available for study at the University of Oregon School of Music.

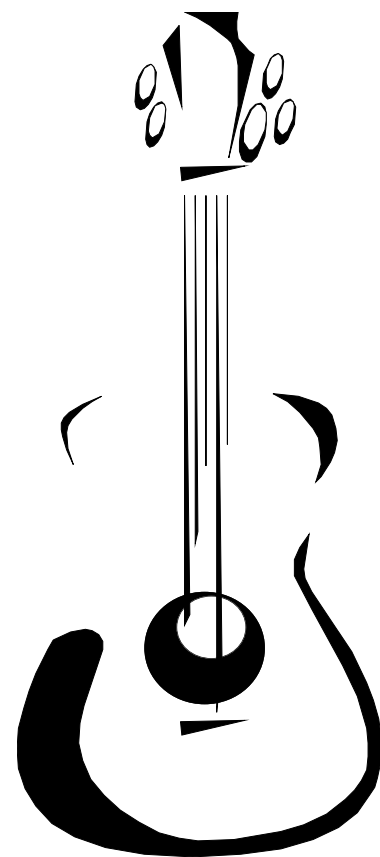
**Connect
with Music**

**MENC: The National Association
for Music Education**



Research Column

Author's name	(Date)	Title	— (Length in pages)
Donald Addison	(1998)	<i>Omabe Music of Igbos in Nigeria</i>	— (365)
Claudia Appel	(1991)	<i>Effects of 4mat Strategy of Instruction</i>	— (167)
Kim Beranek	(1992)	<i>Music Reading & Writing Via Intervals</i>	— (98)
Dorothy Boles	(1990)	<i>Using Head Voice in Cambiata Singers</i>	— (77)
Clare C. Bourguein	(1993)	<i>Teaching Thinking in Elementary Music</i>	— (63)
Melissa Brotons	(1993)	<i>Conditions Affecting Stage Fright in Musicians</i>	— (77)
Argelis Castillo	(1995)	<i>Panamanian Music for Classroom</i>	— (112)
David Chartry	(1992)	<i>A Jazz Improvisation Method</i>	— (117)
Li-Chen Chin	(1996)	<i>Multicultural Music in Higher Education</i>	— (180)
David Coy	(1989)	<i>Jazz Improvisation in Middle School</i>	— (162)
Marlene Creaser	(1991)	<i>Job Sharing Options</i>	— (71)
Debra Gaddis	(1997)	<i>Criteria to Select Choral Music</i>	— (64)
Gary Gilroy	(1995)	<i>Relationship of Time to Effective Band Teaching</i>	— (148)
Ana Gonzales	(2001)	<i>How to Practice: Video to Help Children</i>	— (24+)
Elisabeth Gould	(1996)	<i>College Women Band Conductors</i>	— (202)
Gustav Gyde	(1999)	<i>Ethnomusicology Curriculum, 7th Grade</i>	— (52)
Eric Hammer	(1994)	<i>Micro-teaching for High School Ensemble Pre-service Teachers</i>	— (162)
Mindy Haynes	(2002)	<i>General Music Curriculum for 6th Grade</i>	— (89)
Tracy Heinemeyer	(1999)	<i>Middle-school Band Curriculum</i>	— (81)
Therees T Hibbard	(1994)	<i>Movement in Choral Settings</i>	— (381)
Solveig Holmquist	(1995)	<i>Community Choir School Experience</i>	— (177)
James Imhoff	(1995)	<i>Medieval English Carols for Middle-school Choirs</i>	— (177)
David Johnson	(1997)	<i>Motivation Techniques in High-school Bands</i>	— (359)
Delene Johnson	(1992)	<i>Cooperative Team Learning in Music</i>	— (73)
David Jones	(1994)	<i>Using Children's Opera as Curriculum</i>	— (166)
William Kester	(1991)	<i>Set of Jazz Band Warm-ups</i>	— (75)
Kenneth Kigel	(1989)	<i>Literature for Middle-school Choir & Orchestra</i>	— (45)
Angel Kwok	(1990)	<i>Selected Literature for Children's Choirs</i>	— (178)
Ronald Lepp	(1992)	<i>Theory & Aural Skills in Elementary Music</i>	— (93)
John McManus	(1995)	<i>History of Oregon's State Solo Contest</i>	— (163)
Robert McGlothin	(2001)	<i>Competency Based Musicianship</i>	— (85)
Matthew Montague	(2000)	<i>Mentoring New Music Educators</i>	— (196)
Jill Pauls	(1996)	<i>Mozart Flute Concertos Analyzed</i>	— (132)
Mark Rhoads	(1990)	<i>Decisions During Choral Rehearsals</i>	— (120)
Jeffery Steen	(1999)	<i>Block Scheduling in Secondary School</i>	— (49)
Kenneth Steiger	(1994)	<i>History of Central Oregon Bands</i>	— (179)
Stephen Valdez	(1992)	<i>Electric Guitar Solos</i>	— (264)
Douglass Wagers	(2000)	<i>Step-By-Step Approach to Winds</i>	— (59)
John Weedle	(1989)	<i>Early Bands in Mid-Willamette Valley</i>	— (264)
Rick Wolfgang	(1990)	<i>Early Field Experience</i>	— (172)
Misook Yun	(1999)	<i>Korean Diction for Singers</i>	— (822 + audio)
Todd Zimbelman	(1999)	<i>Developing a Spiral Curriculum for Band</i>	— (32)



MENC National Standards

1. Content Standard: Singing, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music
2. Content Standard: Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music
3. Content Standard: Improvising melodies, variations, and accompaniments
4. Content Standard: Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines
5. Content Standard: Reading and notating music
6. Content Standard: Listening to, analyzing, and describing music
7. Content Standard: Evaluating music and music performances
8. Content Standard: Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts
9. Content Standard: Understanding music in relation to history and culture

